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Edwin A. Nelms

Sheryl L. Nelms

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# Edwin A. Nelms

by Sheryl L. Nelms

the quick flick of a smile  
is still there

the curly hair still  
coal black  
at 67

the luminous brown  
eyes softer now  
mellowed  
by the Valium

and the body  
like a wool sweater  
washed in hot water  
shrunk  
from six foot two  
down to five foot four

bones  
poke out  
under his skin

his shriveled bottom  
hangs in his slacks  
like a limp  
bean bag

brittle bone  
cancer  
has turned him  
into a crisp cicada skin  
ready to crunch  
if

I hug him

